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**CHAPTER 2:  
GOVERNANCE AND  
ORGANIZATIONAL  
STRUCTURE**

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**LEADERSHIP AND  
GOVERNANCE IN  
MENTAL HEALTH  
POLICY IS BROAD-  
BASED**

In Washington State, a broad consensus has developed among the mental health community stakeholders about the need to transform the mental health system. At the state level, both the legislative and executive branches have demonstrated a firm and lasting commitment to this effort.

*Legislative Commitment:* In 2004, the legislature established the Joint Legislative and Executive Task Force on Mental Health Services and Financing, a body that has significantly influenced the direction of change. Based on recommendations of the Task Force, the legislature acted promptly by appropriating monies to fill a critical funding gap, and adopted legislation that has modified state policy related to the provision of mental health service and gave the state's lead agency increased authority (accompanied by the expectation of increased accountability).

In addition, this body prompted the state Department of Social and Health Services to submit a proposal for the Mental Health Transformation Grant, a move that was strongly endorsed by the Governor.

*Executive Branch Commitment:* Governor Gregoire not only supported the Task Force's recommendation to pursue the transformation grant but also demonstrated the strength of her leadership in this arena by establishing the Partnerships in Recovery Initiative to provide an organizational framework for pursuing mental health transformation in Washington State.

Key agencies and community organizations (including tribal/state/local government, providers, consumers, families, mental health planning advisory council and law enforcement) are also supporting the transformation process by committing leadership and resources to the transformation process. A goal of the Transformation Grant is that leaders from key organizations will partner together to develop the future direction of mental health in the state of Washington. These collaborations are occurring and will continue to be facilitated and supported by the MHTP staff.

**FORMAL  
TRANSFORMATION  
GOVERNANCE**

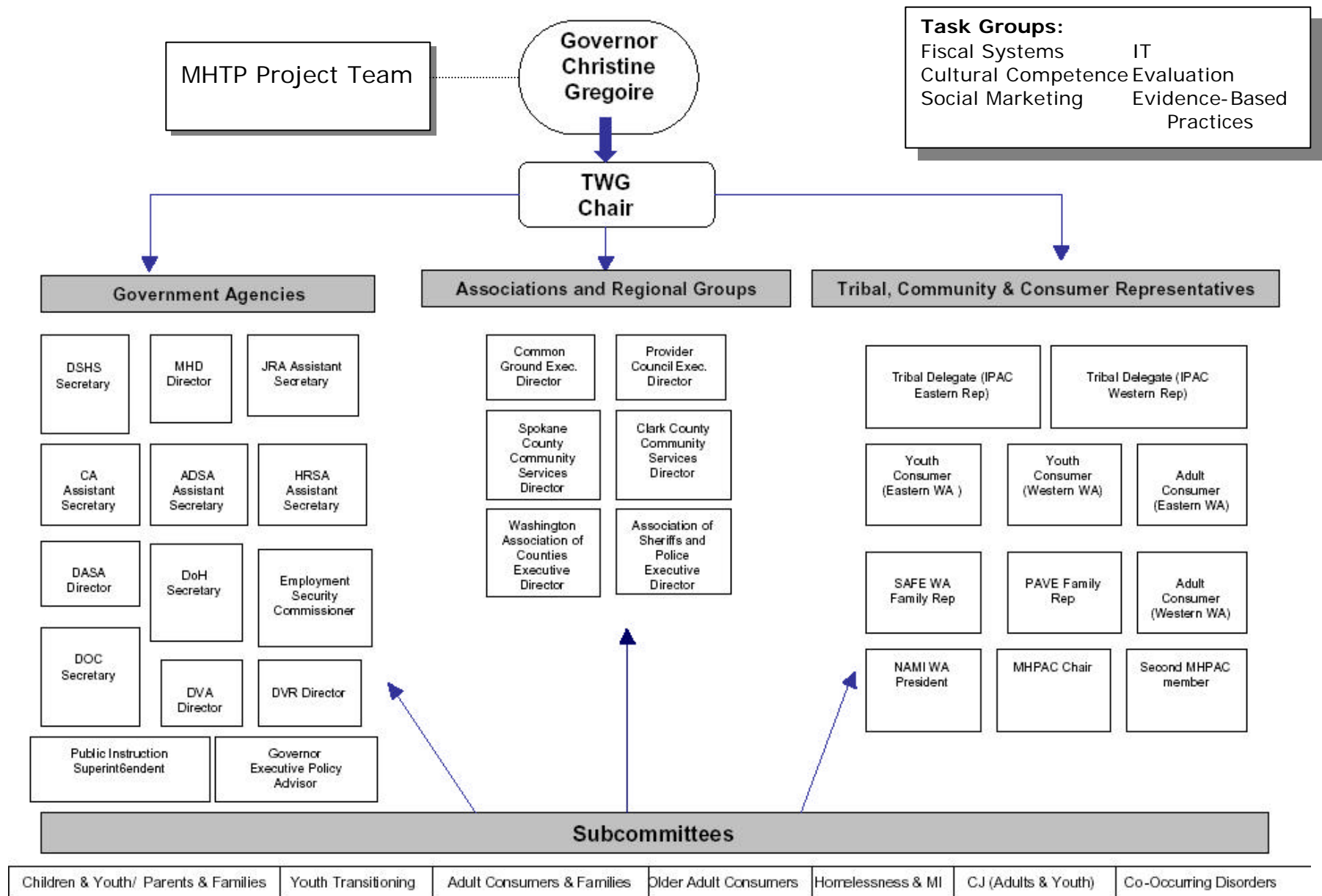
Since the award of the Transformation Grant to Washington, as one of seven demonstration states, a more formal governance structure has been established. (Exhibit 2 illustrates the governance and organization structure for the project.) This, too, is broad-based and draws on leadership from a variety of mental health venues, advocates, and allied fields throughout the state. Governor Gregoire continues to assert her leadership role, and has established the Mental Health Transformation Project team within her office. By making the transformation office an arm of the Governor's Office rather than delegating the work to a state agency, the project achieves a high level of visibility and status necessary and appropriate to the task at hand. This placement also signals to all partners that this is an inclusive process that crosses agency, government, and geographic borders.

**Transformation Work  
Group (TWG)**

The MHTP is guided by the executive-level Transformation Work Group (TWG.) The TWG is comprised of 32 members, including state agency directors, tribal representatives, leaders of local government agencies and community organizations, provider associations, consumer/family organizations including youth, The Mental Health Planning and Advisory Council and law enforcement. This body is charged with establishing the vision for transformation of mental health services in Washington State, preparing the CMHP, and providing strategic direction and oversight to the transformation process. The Transformation Project Executive Director chairs the TWG.

*Organizational  
Structure*

As noted above, the TWG is supported by the MHTP team in the Office of the Governor. This small, professional staff provides staff support, community outreach and facilitation, research, analysis and other services to the TWG and to its various supporting subgroups. Team members bring a variety of skill sets to the project. Several members of the team are consumers who are charged with ensuring the consumer perspective is considered at every step of the project.



**Exhibit 2:  
MHTP Organization Structure**

*Subcommittees identified the priority outcomes a transformed system should be designed to achieve*

The TWG established two sets of advisory teams to help guide its efforts. Subcommittees – comprised of consumers and family representatives, local, state and other community agencies – were appointed to gather public input on strengths and weaknesses of the current system and, more importantly, to define what a transformed system should look like. The subcommittees were charged with identifying what outcomes a transformed system should be designed to achieve. Subcommittee membership included at least 51% Consumers and family members to ensure their work reflected the consumer voice and focus.

*Task Groups identified strategies for achieving those priority outcomes*

The TWG was also advised by task groups, comprised of knowledgeable experts (including agency staff, clinicians and service providers, researchers, and consumer representatives). The task groups were asked to identify specific strategies that could be used to achieve the identified outcomes.

*In Year 2, TWG and the MHTP shift to facilitating and supporting partner agencies*

The outcomes and strategies presented to the TWG provide the direction and form the vision underlying this CMHP. The responsibility of converting these visionary action plans into reality rests with the transformation partners. The TWG and the MHTP project staff will be working in Year 2 and beyond to facilitate and support participating agencies in their efforts to translate the vision into concrete actions.

### **Integrating Transformation with the Mental Health Planning and Advisory Committee**

The Mental Health Block Grant Planning and Advisory Council (MHPAC) is a key participant on the TWG and in the Transformation Grant process. In addition, two Transformation staff members sit on MHPAC and MHPAC members have been involved with the subcommittees and task groups established in year one of the grant. Also, MHPAC sits on the Community Transformation Partnership (CTP), a group of consumer/family organizations that the Transformation Project is helping to develop its structure and direction.

### **Interrelationships between Transformation and the state's Mental Health Block Grant**

We do not yet have clarity on the interrelationships of the Block Grant and the Comprehensive Mental Health Plan. This discussion will begin as soon as we submit our first year plan.